

Message Text

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17

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 IO-10 OMB-01 NSCE-00 SAM-01 CU-02 SAJ-01 /070 W

----- 088640

R 080700Z JAN 75

FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3420

INFO USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 0242

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT CH

SUBJ: CHARTING A MIDDLE COURSE: NEITHER RIGHT NOR LEFT

1. FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE THE DECISION IN EARLY 1973 TO BRAND LIN PIAO'S CRIMES AS "ULTRA-RIGHTIST", THE HIGHEST LEVELS HAVE SEEMINGLY REOPENED THE QUESTION THAT LIN'S LINE WAS ALSO "ULTRA-LEFTIST". IN ITS LEAD ARTICLE "BUILD UP THE RANKS OF THEORISTS FOR OPPOSING AND PREVENTING REVISIONISM" RED FLAG (NO. 1) ATTRIBUTES CHAIRMAN MAO WITHSETTING SOME COMRADES STRAIGHT DURING THE PAST THREE YEARS ON THE LINE OF "CRITICIZING HIS (LIN PIAO'S) ULTRA-RIGHTIST ESSENCE OF BETRAYING THE PARTY AND THE NATION AND RESTORING CAPITALISM OR CRITICIZING ULTRA-LEFTISM".

2. THE LANGUAGE IS VAGUE BUT MARKEDLY AVOIDS REINFORCING THE 1973-74 LINE THAT LIN WAS IN ESSENCE ULTRA-RIGHTIST. THE ARTICLE'S BASIC CONTENTION IS THAT STUDY OF MAO'S LINE WILL PROVIDE THE ANSWERS BUT THE ARTICLE DOES NOT SPELL THIS IN CLEAR -CUT
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FORM.

3. COMMENT. UNDER THE STRAIN OF APPARENT TENSIONS AMONG THE LEADERS AND EFFORTS TO BUILD CONSENSUS ON ISSUES AND RELATIVE LEADERSHIP POSITIONS, PRC MEDIA CURRENTLY SEEM CAUTIOUS, AND TO BE SETTING A MIDDLE LINE WHICH IS NEITHER RIGHT NO LEFT. (ANOTHER RED FLAG ARTICLE REFERS TO OPPORTUNIISM OF RIGHT AND LEFT DURING THE ANTI-JAPANESE WAR AND DEFINES MAO'S TACTICS AS THE LINE BETWEEN.) IT APPEARS THAT BEGINNING WITH THE NEW YEAR EDITORIAL THE PRC IN 1975 IS SEEKING TO AVOID THE CONTENTIONS BETWEEN THE EXTREMES WHICH HAVE PLAGUED THE COUTRY SINCE THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION AND TO SET ITSELF A BALANCED COURSE ACCEPTABLE OR AT LEAST NON-ANTONGAONISTIC TO ALL (HONG KONG 0001). FAILURE TO CLARIFY MAO'S LINE ON THE FUNDAMENTAL ISSUE OF LIN'S CRIMES COULD ALSO MEAN CONSENSUS AND THAT DECISIONS ARE STILL IN PROCESS OF FORMULATION AT THE TOP. CADRES WHO LOOK TO THIS ARTICLE FOR GUIDANCE ARE LIKELY TO BE PUZZLED. IN ADDITION, POSSIBILITY THAT LIN'S ULTRA-LEFTISM COULD AGAIN BE RAISED IN THE FUTURE CAN HARDLY BE OF COMFORT TO THE LEFT WHICH SEEMINGLY HAD SCOTCHED THIS LINE IN 1973.
CROSS

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